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LETTER DATED 25 OCTOBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I am pleased to transmit the enclosed letter dated 24 October 1993 from His Excellency Mr. Meles Zenawi, President of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, addressed to you.

I would be most grateful if you could have this text circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mulugeta ETEFFA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 24 October 1993 from the President of the
Transitional Government of Ethiopia addressed to the
President of the Security Council

I am writing to you pursuant to the mandate given to me by my colleagues, the heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the leaders of countries members of the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), to follow developments in Somalia.

It gives me great pleasure to communicate to you the document, enclosed herewith, containing my proposals for paving the way for resuming the process of national reconciliation in Somalia.

These proposals are the result of extensive consultations I have had with countries of our subregion and OAU and they are based, as well, on an objective assessment of the situation on the ground in Somalia.

I am convinced that the United Nations is the last hope in Somalia and that therefore the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) should not be made to fail in that country. This is crucial, both for the people of Somalia, and for the neighbouring countries as well as for the image and credibility of the United Nations.

I am equally convinced that, while the United Nations cannot be replaced in Somalia, it nevertheless requires the assistance of African and neighbouring countries, most particularly in the political area and in ensuring the implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement. The United Nations should make use of the offer of assistance by the neighbouring countries because we are all working for the same goal and because, in our view, it is the partnership between the United Nations on one hand and OAU and the neighbouring countries on the other that could ensure success in Somalia.

It is in this spirit that I am communicating to you the aforementioned proposals and it is my earnest hope that they can be incorporated in a decision, preferably in a new resolution by the Security Council on the question of Somalia, a decision which, given the delicate and fragile situation in Somalia, needs to be made as a matter of urgency.

Requesting Your Excellency's personal initiative on this very urgent matter, I wish also to ask you to ensure the distribution of the attached document to the members of the Security Council as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Meles ZENAWI
President of the Transitional
Government of Ethiopia

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Appendix

Proposal for keeping the momentum in Somalia: steps that need to be taken by the Security Council as a matter of urgency

While there has been a dramatic change for the better in the situation in Mogadishu as a result of the recent change in approach, it is also obvious that these gains are very fragile. No one can count on their durability unless steps are taken as speedily as possible so that we may be able to build on the limited gains already made. Time is of the essence in Somalia and, in this regard, it would be of tremendous help if the Security Council was to take a decision incorporating the following ideas, as a matter of urgency.

1. Need to establish an independent commission or a fact-finding mission

It is my considered view that the major impetus for resuming the process of national reconciliation in Somalia would be the setting up of a commission or a fact-finding mission charged with the task of investigating the events leading to and surrounding the incident of 5 June 1993 in Mogadishu and with submitting its report and recommendations thereon to the Security Council.

I feel it would be useful if the Security Council appointed the Chairman and the other members of the commission from among jurists, intellectuals and credible and prominent personalities from Africa and from other regions of the world. It is my personal view that eminent personalities such as Mr. Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States of America, could play an important and key role in the setting up and work of such a commission.

The establishment of a commission is extremely urgent because the initial hurdle we all face in ensuring the resumption of the national reconciliation process in Somalia, in which all major actors would participate, can be removed only by such a measure. This can also assist in formalizing the present de facto cease-fire in Mogadishu and in making it durable, as well as in solving the question of prisoners in United Nations custody.

In short, the setting up of an independent commission or fact-finding mission is so closely linked to the initiation of the national reconciliation process that delay in its being set up would also mean delay in starting the talks among the Somali factions on the implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement and on national reconciliation.

2. Reaffirmation by the Security Council of the responsibility of Somalis to solve their own problems by themselves

It would be helpful if the Security Council were to reiterate that the role of UNOSOM is to assist Somalis in solving their problems. Such a reiteration would serve to calm the fears of many Somalis with regard to the role of the United Nations and would encourage UNOSOM to assist, rather than stifle, or

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appear to stifle, Somali initiatives that are in conformity with the letter and spirit of the Addis Ababa agreement.

3. Need for a more explicit endorsement by the Security Council of the Addis Ababa agreement

The Addis Ababa agreement has been accepted by all Somali groups and has also been the basis for the political activities of UNOSOM. However, while UNOSOM has tried to implement the Addis Ababa agreement, the fact that it has not been obliged to do so by any Security Council resolution has created an unfortunate ambivalence on the part of some who are managing affairs in Somalia on behalf of UNOSOM. It would therefore be helpful if the Security Council endorsed the Addis Ababa agreement as a basis for the peaceful solution of the problem in Somalia.

4. Partnership between the United Nations and the OAU countries of the subregion

It has now been fully recognized that an African solution must be found to the problems of Somalia. It is my conviction that it is now time for this concept to be incorporated in a Security Council resolution or be endorsed by the Security Council. In this context, it would be extremely helpful if UNOSOM were to be explicitly directed to carry out its mandate in partnership with OAU and the countries of the subregion, especially with regard to seeking and implementing a political solution to Somalia's problems.
